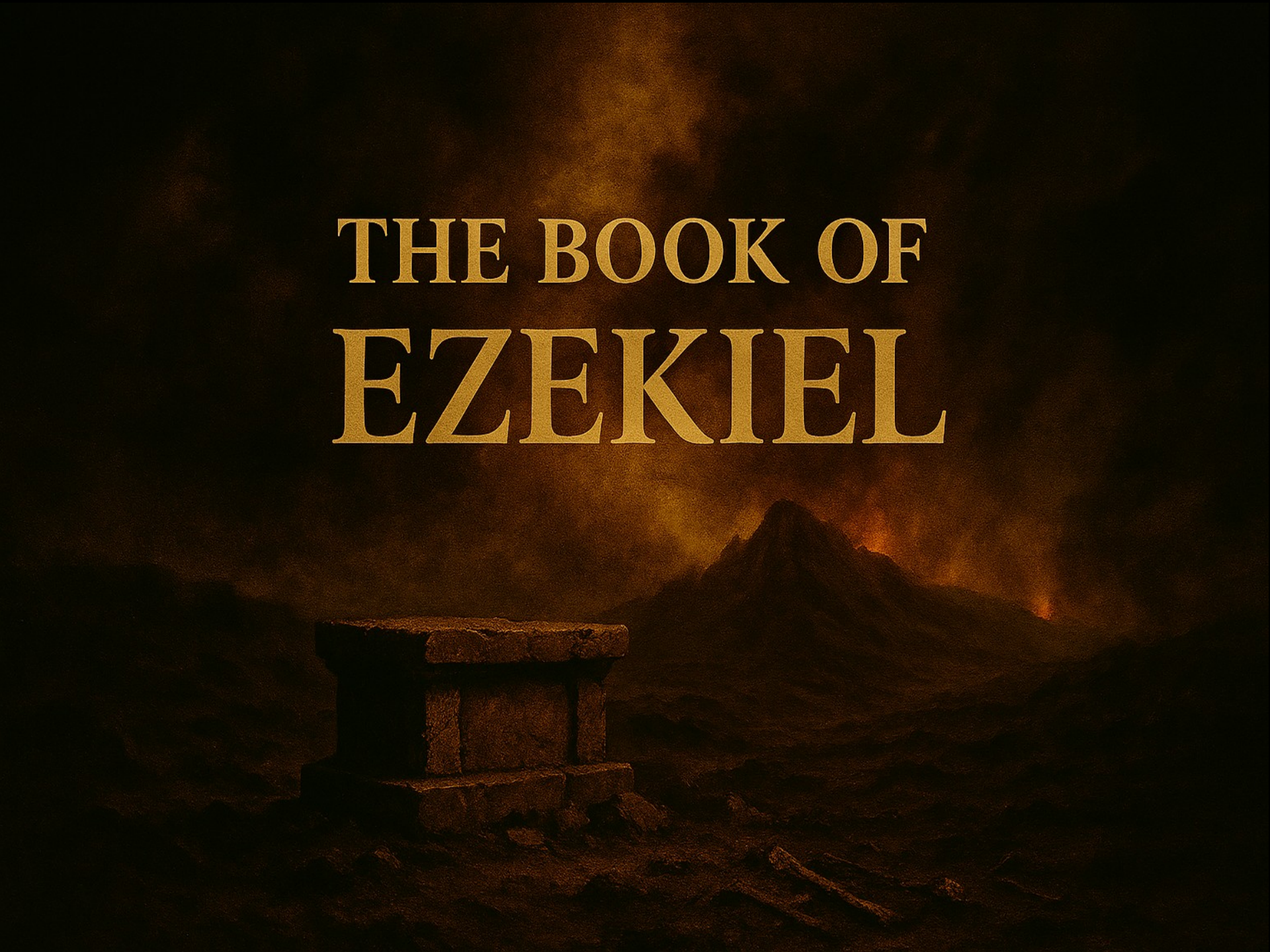
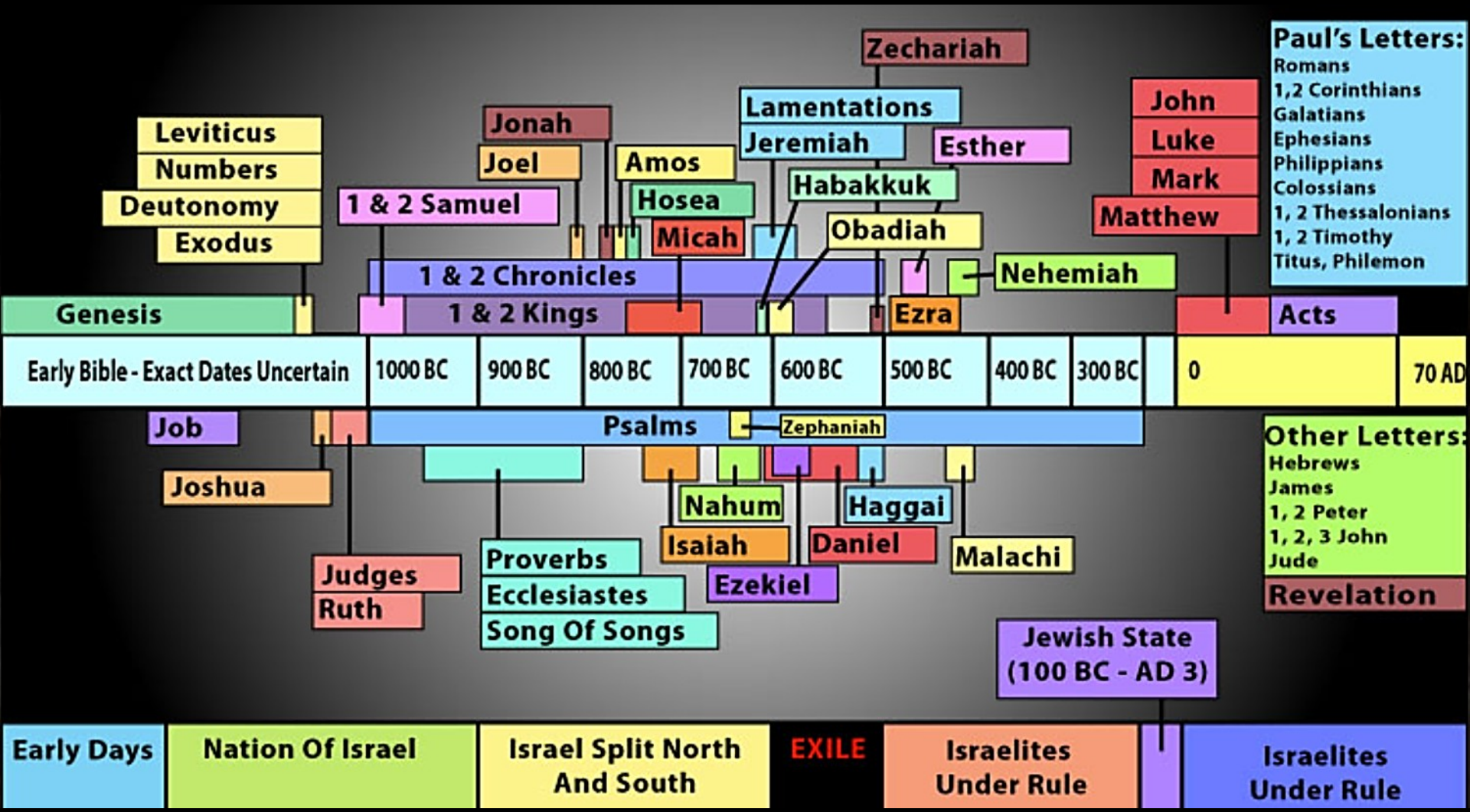
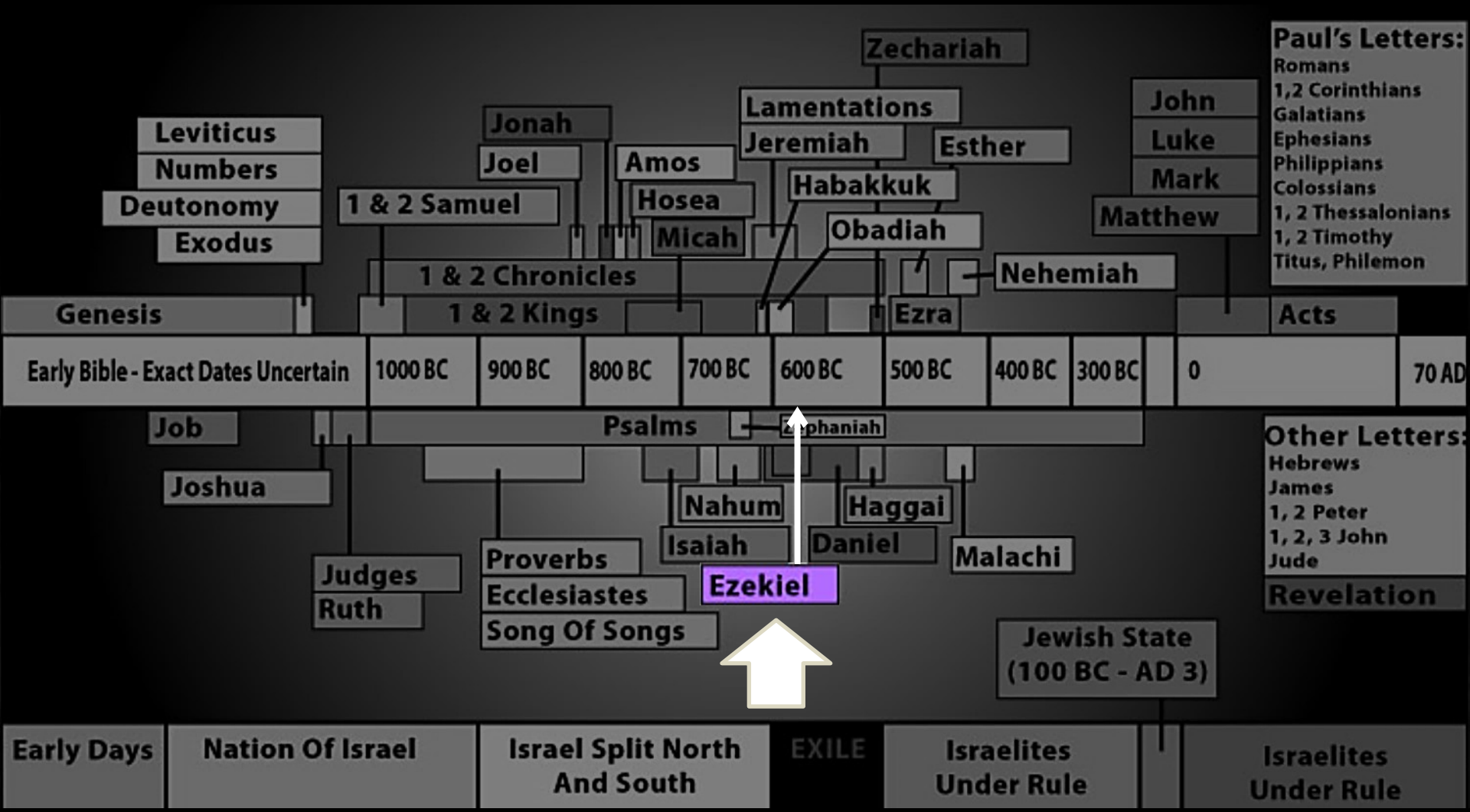

THE BOOK OF
EZEKIEL

Timeline of the Bible



Timeline of the Bible



Ezekiel written 593-571 B.C.

Introduction to Ch 17

- Chapter 14
  - The prophecy against the idolatry of the elders
  - The certainty of the destruction of Jerusalem

This is now emphasized by 3 parables:

- Chapter 15 (shortest chapter in Ezekiel)
  - The **parable** of the worthless vine
    - Israel was supposed to produce fruit – but didn't!
- Chapter 16 (longest chapter in Ezekiel)
  - The **parable** of the abandoned baby
  - Rescued, nurtured, embraced, but then became a harlot
- Chapter 17
  - The **parable** of two eagles and a vine,
  - Ezekiel foretells God's judgment upon Judah for seeking Egypt's help against Babylon
    - Other reading: Jeremiah 2:18-36 / 37:5–10 / 42:13–22

Introduction to Ch 17

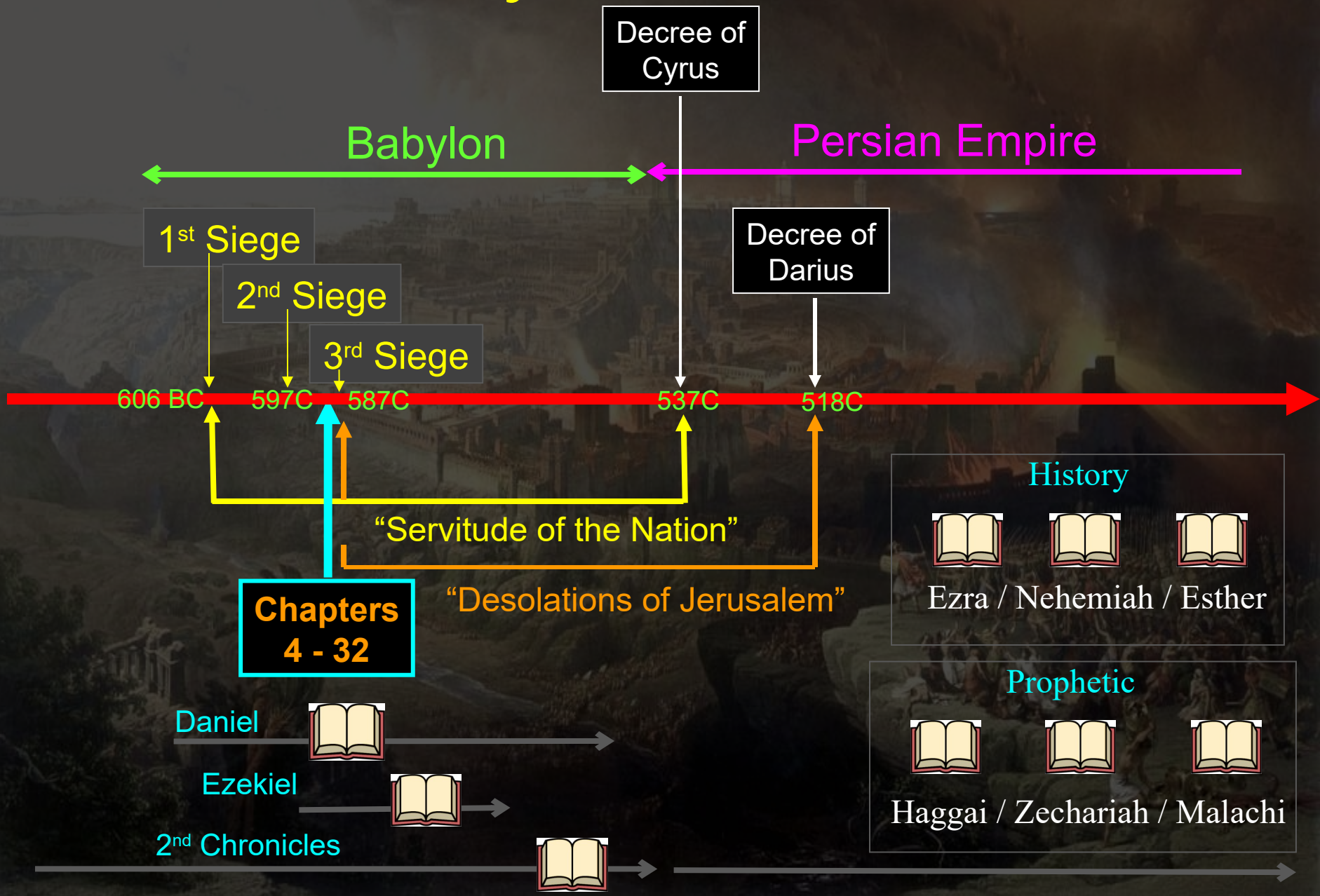
- While Ezekiel was in Babylon using a parable of the two eagles to describe this political treachery, Jeremiah was on the ground in Jerusalem, witnessing the same events in real-time.
- Both prophets viewed turning to Egypt not just as a bad political move, but as a spiritual betrayal of God's direct command to submit to Babylon.
- It was also a direct violation of Deuteronomy 17:16
- *"The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the Lord has told you,* ***'You are not to go back that way again.'"***

Introduction to Ch 17

- Judah, Babylon and Egypt are the three in the riddle and parable of Chapter 17:
  - Stated in 17:3-10
  - Explained in 17:11-21

- The date of the prophecy is between the 6th month of Zedekiah's 6th year of reign and the 5th month of the 7th year after the carrying away of Jehoiachin, that is, *almost five years before the destruction of Jerusalem*

History of the Times



Review

- Ezekiel was not offering them hope.
- He had pointed out to them that Jerusalem would fall, that God was going to judge them for their idolatry and their sins.
- After swearing allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar, Zedekiah treacherously conspired against him and sought alliance with Egypt to avoid his commitments.
  - The alliance, which Jeremiah had warned against, proved weak, unsatisfactory and foolhardy.

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

Chapter 17

The Parable of the Eagle & Vine

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable
unto the house of Israel;

Ezekiel 17:1,2

- *Heb: chiydah* riddle, difficult question, enigmatic parable, requiring an explanation;
  - The "riddle" Samson posed to the Philistines Jud. 14:12-19
  - The "hard questions" the Queen of Sheba asked Solomon 1 Kings 10:1; 2 Chron. 9:1
  - There are over 200 figures of speech in the Bible!
    - In 1898 EW Bullinger published *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, where he meticulously classified **217 unique figures of speech**

And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD;
A great eagle with great wings, long winged,
full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the
highest branch of the cedar:

Ezekiel 17: 3

- The great eagle is Babylon Jer 48:40; 49:22; Isa 46:11
  - 1. The Anzu Bird (The Lion-Headed Eagle)
    - The most famous "eagle" in Babylonian and Sumerian mythology was a symbol of storm clouds and thunder.
  - 2. Association with the Sun God (Shamash)
    - The eagle was closely linked to Shamash, the god of justice and the sun.

Babylon - The Great Eagle





- Jeremiah used it as he wrote of Nebuchadnezzar:
  - “For thus saith the Lord; Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread his wings over Moab” Jer 48:40

Babylon - The Great Eagle





- “Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs!” Jer 49:22

Babylon - The Great Eagle





- Daniel saw the Babylonian Empire rising up out of the sea, and it was in the form of a lion with eagle's wings Dan. 7:4

Babylon - The Great Eagle

- By using the eagle to describe Babylon, Ezekiel was using an image that the Babylonians themselves were proud of.
- It represented their speed, their reach, and their divine right to rule.
- When he introduces the second eagle (Egypt), he is showing that Egypt is trying to compete for the same "predator" status, but as the parable shows, they wouldn't have the same strength as the first.

And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD;
A great eagle with great wings, long winged,
full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto
Lebanon, and took the
highest branch of the cedar:

Ezekiel 17: 3

- A pseudonym for the Temple at Jerusalem, called “Lebanon” by Jews because its woodwork was wholly of cedars of Lebanon.

--Eusebius

And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD;
A great eagle with great wings, longwinged,
full of feathers, which had divers colours, came
unto Lebanon, and took the
highest branch of the cedar:

Ezekiel 17: 3

- The fleece-like tuft at the top of the tree.
  Ez 31:3–14
- It is the Nation Israel; specifically, the royal house of David, King Jeconiah (then but eighteen years old) and many of the chiefs and people with him
  2Ki 24:8, 12–16

Eagle as Ensign

- Eagle symbol of Israel's Enemies
  - Greeks [Spartans, Trojans}
    - Antiochus Epiphanes
  - Romans
    - Titus Vespasian
  - Herod
  - Byzantium, Russia (Romanoff's)
  - Franks, Germans

Eagle as Ensign



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Eagle as Ensign





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Eagle as Ensign







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Eagle as Ensign









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Eagle as Ensign









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Eagle as Ensign









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Eagle as Ensign















He cropped off the top of his young twigs,
and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants.

Ezekiel 17:4

- "Top of his young twig": who would this be?
- The very young King Jeconiah, 18 years old,
  - sometimes called Coniah, sometimes called Jehoiachin.
- He was carried to Babylon, the city of merchants and trade. He was carried into captivity, leaving the Judean throne vacant.

He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed *it* by great waters, *and* set it *as a* willow tree.

Ezekiel 17:5

- The seed of the land = Zedekiah
  - When Nebuchadnezzar (the First Eagle) conquered Jerusalem in 597 BCE, he didn't destroy it completely.
  - He took King Jehoiachin away and hand-picked Zedekiah (Jehoiachin's uncle) to rule in his place.
  - The "Fruitful Field“ refers to Judah/Jerusalem.
  - Nebuchadnezzar's "benevolence" was a strategic move: he wanted a stable, productive "vassal state" that would pay tribute and act as a buffer against Egypt.

And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.

Ezekiel 17:6

- The Willow (or Vine) grew into a "spreading vine of low stature."
- Nebuchadnezzar didn't want a "Great Cedar" (an independent, powerful kingdom); he wanted a "Vine" or a "Willow"—something that stayed low to the ground and was dependent on the "waters" of Babylonian protection.

A Double Meaning?

He took also of the seed of the land,
and planted it in a fruitful field;
he placed *it* by great waters, *and*
set it *as a* willow tree.

Ezekiel 17:5

- The seed of the land? – Daniel 1:3-4 / 2 Kings 24:14-15
- Babylon as a fruitful field?
- The Great waters of the Tigris and Euphrates?
- The willow – associated with the Jewish captives – Psalm 137

Verse 5 - Alternative

- While the "fruitful field" in the riddle is Judah, the phrase "placed it by great waters" is a deliberate Babylonian "trigger."
- Babylon was the land of the Tigris and Euphrates—a land defined by its massive irrigation canals.
- Psalm 137:1-2: *"By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars [willows] we hung our harps."*
- Jeremiah told the exiles to "build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce" (Jeremiah 29:5). In this sense, the "faithful" (like Daniel) were indeed "planted" in Babylon and thrived there, even in captivity.

There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him, and shot forth her branches toward him, that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation.

Ezekiel 17:7

- A rival eagle to the first one:
- The first one was Babylon; the second one was Egypt, Pharaoh Hophra Jer 44:30; 37:7
- This vine (Israel) reached out to Egypt hoping to be 'watered' by her and escape Babylon's clutches!

It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

Ezekiel 17:8

- Nebuchadnezzar had taken the youngest son of Josiah, Metaniah, put him on the throne as a vassal, and renamed him Zedekiah.
- Zedekiah swore an oath before the Lord to be loyal to Nebuchadnezzar.
- In another amazing act of ingratitude, Zedekiah rebelled against king Neb, and against God!

Treacherous Rebellion

- This second eagle was not only Egypt, but Pharaoh Hopra. 2 Chr 36:9-13; Jer 44:30; 37:7; 52:1-7
- With no cause, Zedekiah turned to him for support
- Around 120yrs before this, Isaiah spoke out against such an alliance. Isa 30:1-7;31:1-3
- The prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel and others, all pointed out that Nebuchadnezzar was the instrument of God bringing judgment to the land in the first place!
- Note also this ‘prophecy’ of Ezekiel was around 5 years BEFORE Zedekiah actually rebelled!

1 Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that
take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a
covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add
sin to sin:
2 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not
asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in
the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the
shadow of Egypt!
3 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your
shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your
confusion.

Isaiah 30:1-3

Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof.

Ezekiel 17:9

Yea, behold, *being* planted, shall it prosper?
shall it not utterly wither,
when the east wind toucheth it?
it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.

Ezekiel 17:10

- The ‘east wind’ represents Nebuchadnezzar.

  Cf.Job 27:21; Isa 27:8; Hos 13:15

- The undercurrent here is instead of being loyal to the first eagle, it treacherously turned to the second one.
- Zedekiah was taken at Jericho, on Jewish soil

  Jer 52:8

The Interpretation

- Now we get to the second part which is in effect the interpretation of this parable.
- From verse 11 - 21 we will see Ezekiel himself interpreting the previous 10 verses.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these *things mean*? tell *them*, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;

Ezekiel 17:11,12

And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land:

That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, *but* that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

Ezekiel 17: 13-14

- Nebuchadnezzar dealt sincerely and openly in proposing conditions, and moderate ones at that!
- Therefore, Zedekiah's treachery was merely a counterpart to their treachery towards God.

But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such *things*? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?

Ezekiel 17:15

- Egypt abounded in both, but they were forbidden to Israel Deut 17:16; Is 31:1, 3; Isa 36:9
- The whole region from Thebes to Memphis was filled with royal stalls: 20,000 chariots with two horses in each could be furnished for war.

Diodorus Siculus [1.45]

Oaths

- One of the issues you will discover in the Scripture is that an oath before the Lord, even an oath made under fraud, needs to be honored.
- Even the Gibeonite oath, made on fraudulent premises, still had to be honored. Josh 9; 2 Sam 21:1-3

Oaths

- Jeremiah had been warning Zedekiah that he had made an oath and he would have to hold to it. But obviously Zedekiah went ahead despite those warnings, and sought aid from Egypt.
- The swearing of an oath in the Old Testament was authenticated by accompanying sacrifices. That involved the Lord who took them seriously.

As I *live, saith the* Lord GOD, *surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of* Babylon *he shall die.*

Ezekiel 17:16

- Zedekiah would die in the land that he despised, and under the king whose covenant he broke.
- He repeats the prophecy of Ezek 12:13

Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons:

Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these *things*, he shall not escape.

Ezekiel 17: 17,18

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.

Ezekiel 17: 19

- The implication was that there had been a sacrifice with his oath, so that it was no longer just a little commitment on the part of Zedekiah; with a sacrifice it had become the Lord's covenant.
- *"By your words you'll be justified and by your words you'll be condemned"* – Matt 12:37

And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me.

Ezekiel 17:20

- Zedekiah's crime was committed against Nebuchadnezzar, but God declares it was a trespass against Him!
- *"Sometimes God allows a godless nation to harass and actually destroy a people who claim to be God's people but have departed from Him"* – Chuck Missler

And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.

Ezekiel 17:21

- The ending (by not trusting God) was worse than anything Zedekiah (or Jerusalem) could have imagined.
- *"I lost bigger than I ever thought I'd win!"*
  - Miracle on 34th Street (Victor Landberg)

And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.

Ezekiel 17:21

- King Zedekiah thought he was being a master politician by playing Babylon against Egypt.
- He thought he was ‘winning’ by breaking his oath to Nebuchadnezzar (and God) to gain freedom.
- Instead, his ‘wisdom’ led to the total destruction of Jerusalem… his attempt to "win" resulted in a loss of catastrophic proportions.

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you
seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a
fool, that he may be wise.
19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.
For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own
craftiness.
20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the
wise, that they are vain.
21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are
yours

1 Corinthians 3:18-21

5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart;
and lean not unto thine own understanding.
6 In all thy ways acknowledge him,
and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

The King of the Davidic Line

- Ezekiel Ch 17-18 are two chapters dealing with the ending of the Dynasty of David, the succession of kings in Judah:
  - *"But in the middle are next three verses which deal with the most important King of the Davidic line, namely the Messiah*." CM Eze 17:22-24

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- God compares Himself to Nebuchadnezzar:
- *"He took of the seed of the land and planted it, so will I, but with better success than he had.*
- *The branch he plucked (Zedekiah) and planted, flourished but for a time, to perish at last; …*

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set *it*; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant *it* upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- *God says: "…I will plant a scion of the same tree, the house of David, to whom the kingdom belongs by an everlasting covenant, and it shall be the shelter of the whole world, and shall be for ever."*
- In the Old Testament, the Messiah is often described using the Hebrew word *tsemach*, which is frequently translated as **"Branch"** or **"Scion"** Zec 3:8; 6:12; Isa 11:1; 4:2; Jer 23:5; 33:15

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- The Lord declares that He himself will pluck off a shoot from the top of the high cedar (the Davidic house);

  vv. 2, 3; Isa 53:2

  and plant it on a high mountain, that all may see it and find protection under it

  Isa 2:2; 11:10 Eze 17:23; Mat 13:31, 32

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- A great picture of the Messiah! “a *tender* plant and root out of a dry ground”; Isa 53:2
- The beginning of His kingdom being humble, His reputed parents of lowly rank, though King David’s lineal representatives;
- Yet, God here calls Him, in respect to His purpose, “the highest … of the high” Ps 89:27

In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.

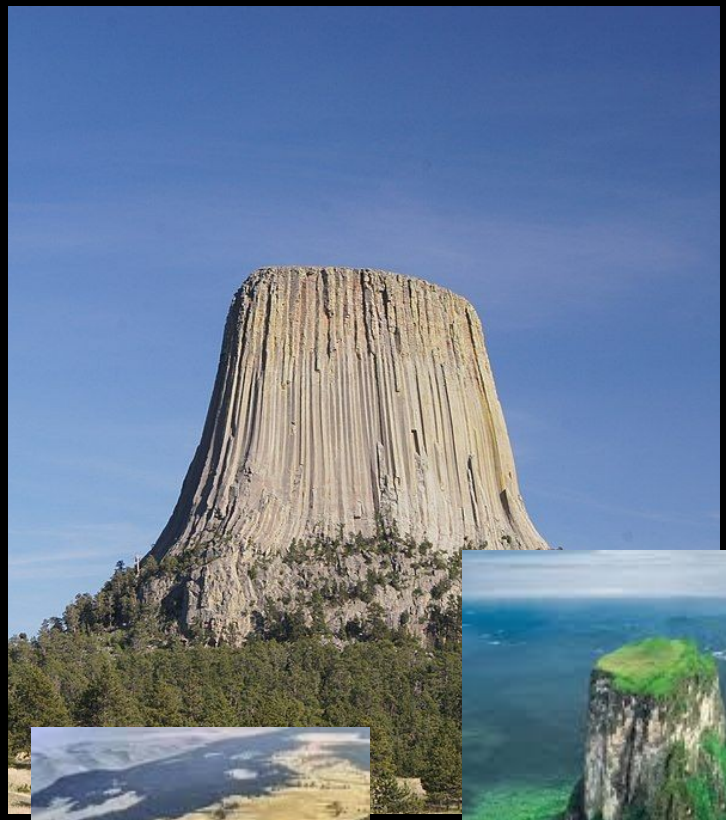
Ezekiel 17:23

- Don't miss the conclusion!
- *"all fowl of every wing"!*
- Every 'Eagle' – every power and authority will be subservient to the Goodly Ceder (not lowly vine!)
  - Fowl (birds) in scripture are 'ministers or workers of iniquity'
  - All powers and dominions will bow before Him!

And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.

Ezekiel 17:24

- The establishment of this new and universal kingdom by YHWH will lead the world to recognize him as the Lord of human life and the Controller of Israel's destiny.
  - Other kingdoms are likewise called trees. 31:5, 8, 14, 16, 18




Daniel 4:20: The tree you saw, grew and became strong, whose top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the entire Earth.
THE UNSEEN ENCYCLOPEDIA
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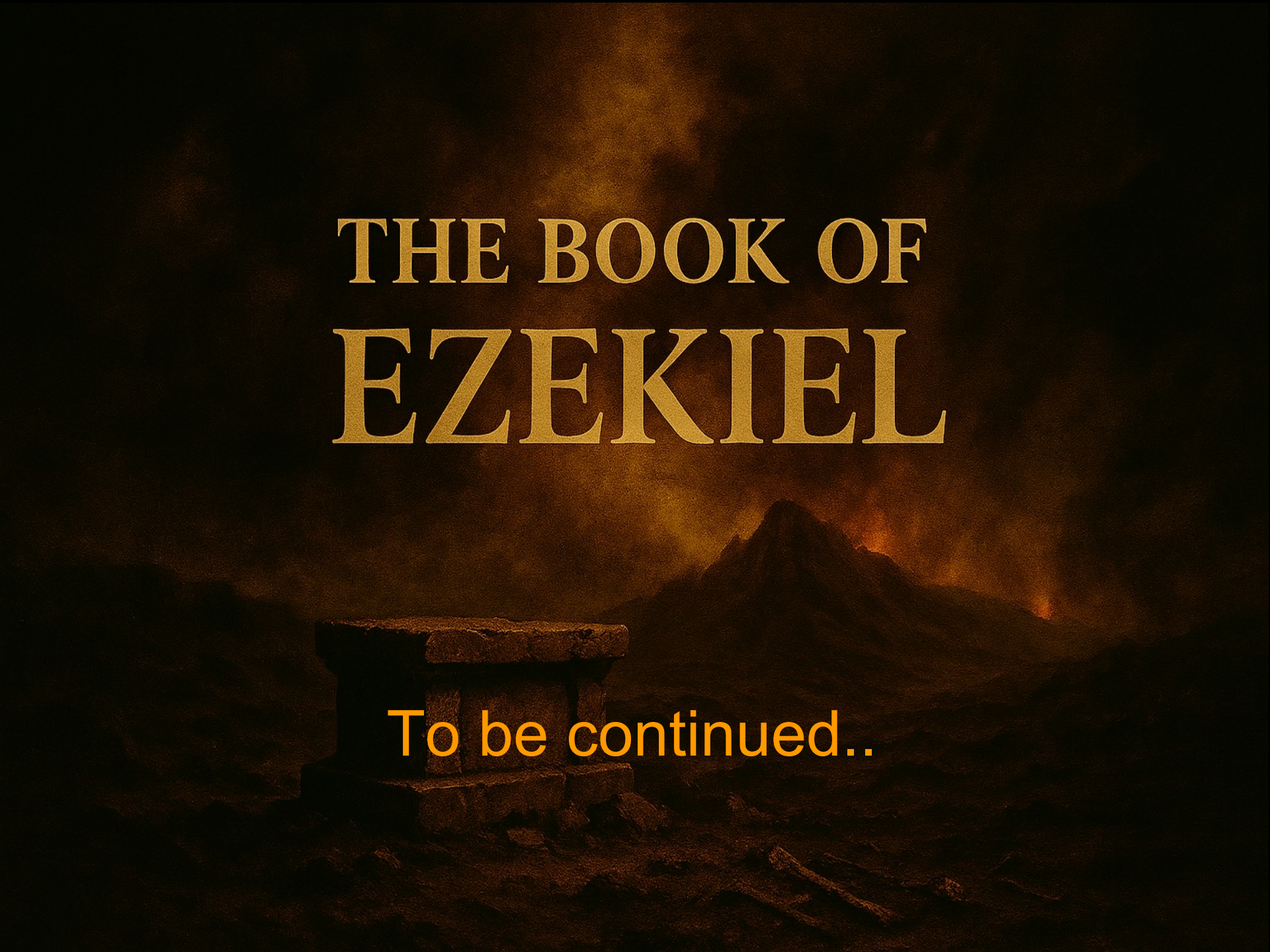





ywithadrone

The Coming Messiah!

- *This prophecy was **not** fulfilled when Israel returned to the land after the Babylonian Captivity*.
- *The fulfillment of verses 22-24 awaits God's establishment of Israel in the Millennium under the Messiah, Jesus Christ.*
- At that time God's kingdom will rule the world Dan. 2:44-45; Zech. 14:3-9, 16-17


THE BOOK OF
EZEKIEL
To be continued..

The Final Kings of Judah

Josiah

Died in battle against Pharaoh Necho

Jehoahaz

Reigned 3 months

Taken to Egypt by Pharaoh Necho

Jehoiakim

Reigned 11 years

3rd yr (606 B.C.)

Nebuchadnezzar

1st Siege

Jehoiachin

(Jeconiah)

Blood Curse: Jer 22:30

Reigned 3 months

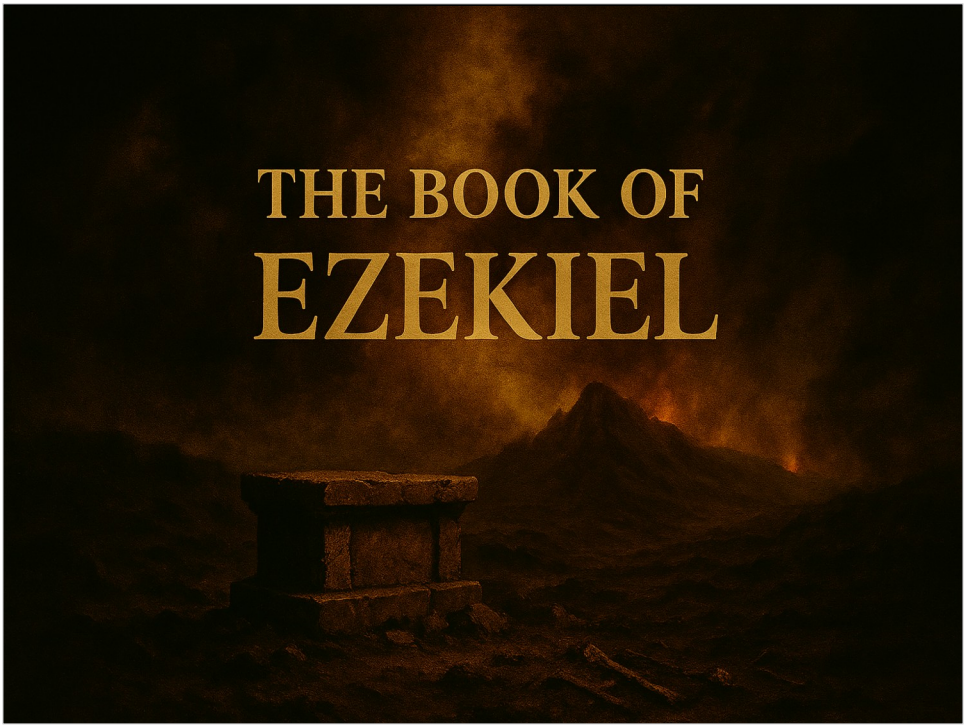
Taken to Babylon

Zedekiah

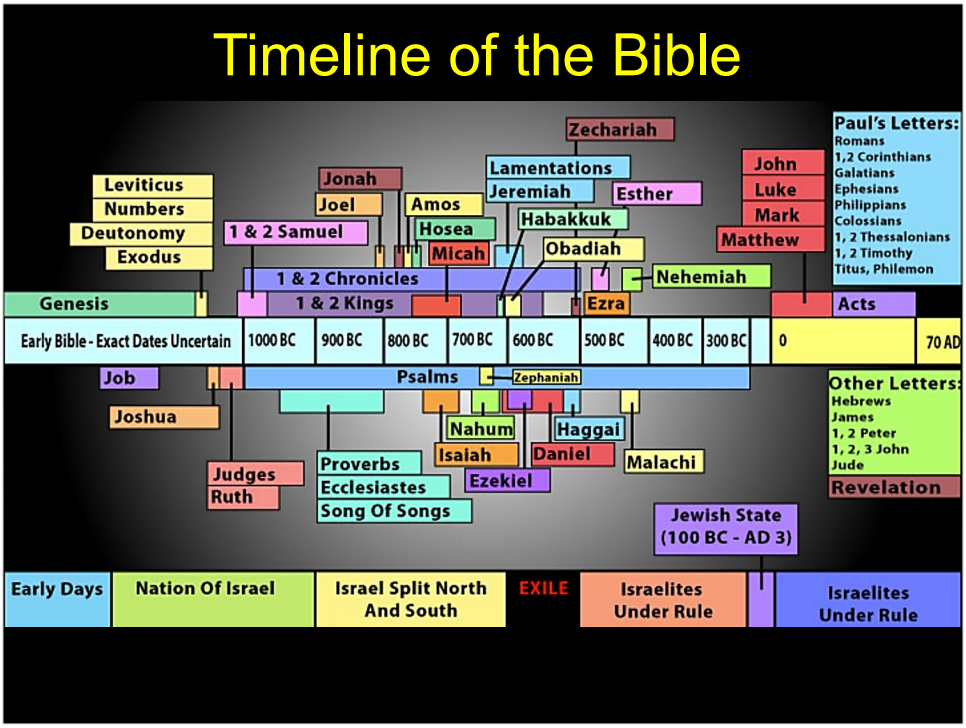
Appointed by Nebuchadnezzar Reigned 11 years

Finally taken captive in final siege

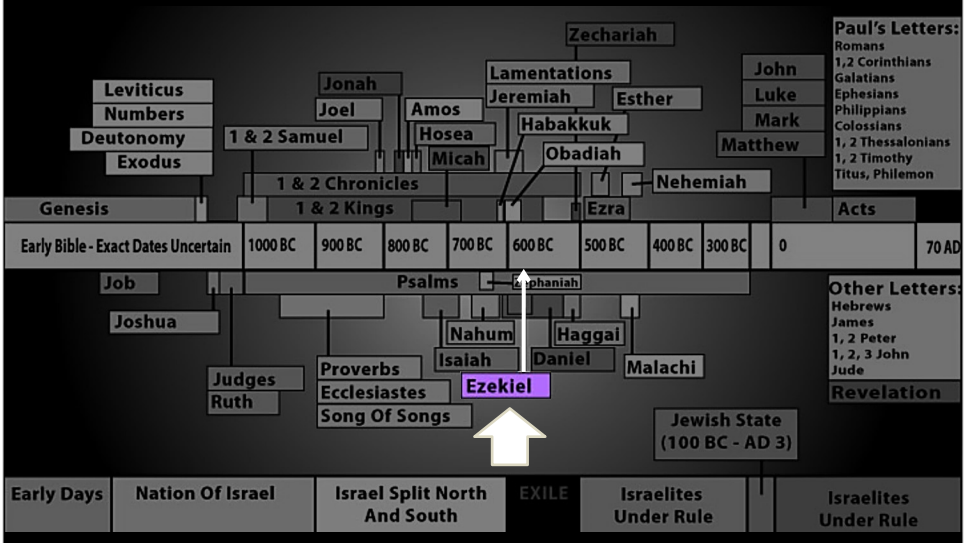
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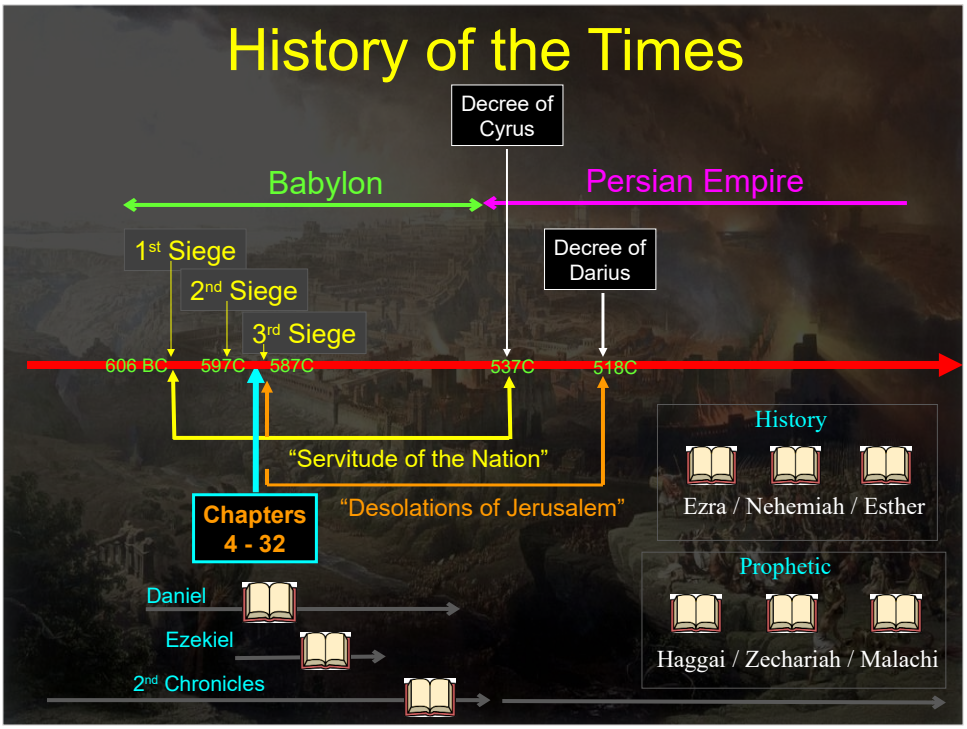
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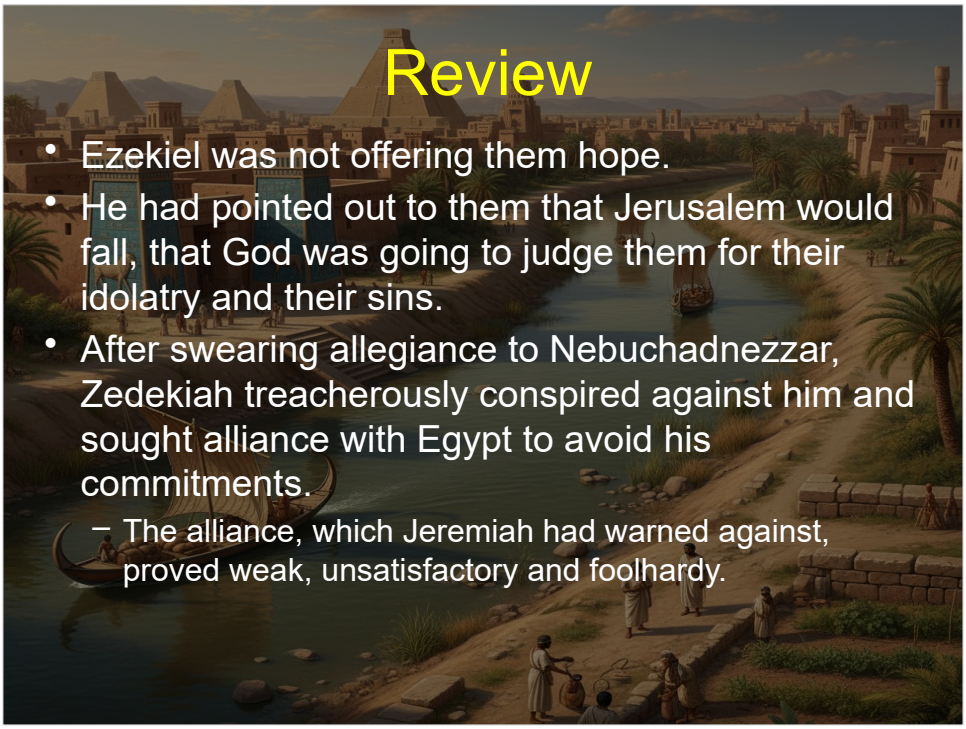
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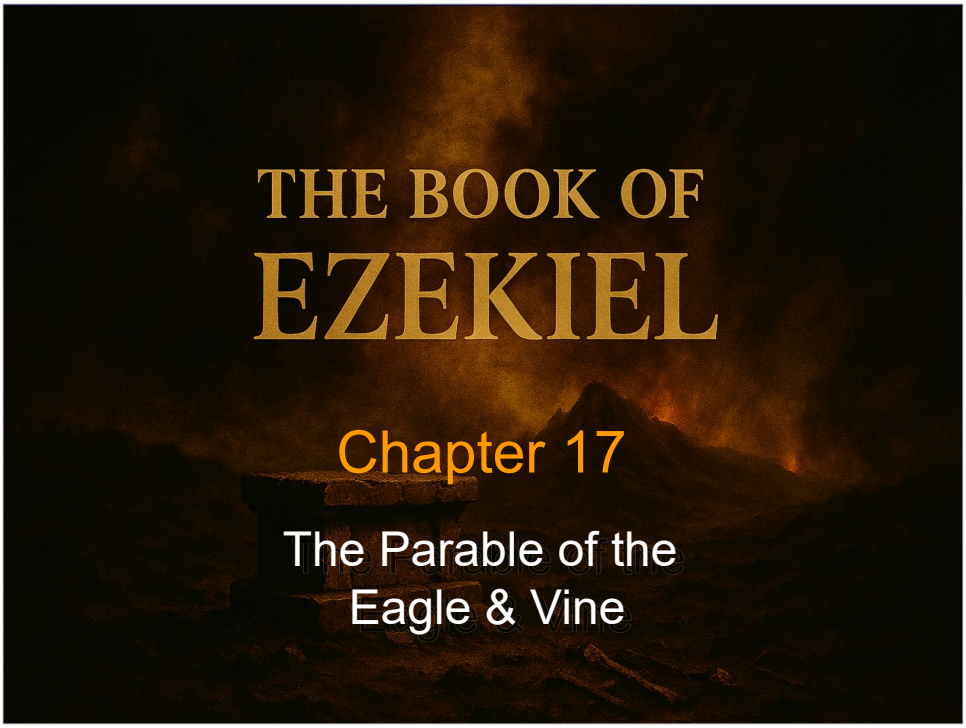
Although Esther comes after Nehemiah, its events antedate Nehemiah by about 30 years.

Esther made possible the work of Nehemiah: Except for her, Jerusalem might never have been rebuilt, and there might have been a very different story to tell to all future ages. If the Hebrew nation had been wiped out 500 years before it brought Christ into the world, it might have made a gigantic difference in the destiny of mankind! No Messiah for a lost world…



Review

- Ezekiel was not offering them hope.
- He had pointed out to them that Jerusalem would fall, that God was going to judge them for their idolatry and their sins.
- After swearing allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar, Zedekiah treacherously conspired against him and sought alliance with Egypt to avoid his commitments.
  - The alliance, which Jeremiah had warned against, proved weak, unsatisfactory and foolhardy.


THE BOOK OF
EZEKIEL
Chapter 17
The Parable of the
Eagle & Vine

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable
unto the house of Israel;

Ezekiel 17:1,2

- *Heb: chiydah* riddle, difficult question, enigmatic parable, requiring an explanation;
  - The "riddle" Samson posed to the Philistines Jud. 14:12-19
  - The "hard questions" the Queen of Sheba asked Solomon 1 Kings 10:1; 2 Chron. 9:1
  - There are over 200 figures of speech in the Bible!
    - In 1898 EW Bullinger published *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, where he meticulously classified **217 unique figures of speech**

And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD;
A great eagle with great wings, long winged,
full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the
highest branch of the cedar:

Ezekiel 17: 3

- The great eagle is Babylon Jer 48:40; 49:22; Isa 46:11
  - 1. The Anzu Bird (The Lion-Headed Eagle)
    - The most famous "eagle" in Babylonian and Sumerian mythology was a symbol of storm clouds and thunder.
  - 2. Association with the Sun God (Shamash)
    - The eagle was closely linked to Shamash, the god of justice and the sun.

Babylon - The Great Eagle





- Jeremiah used it as he wrote of Nebuchadnezzar:
  - "For thus saith the Lord; Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread his wings over Moab" Jer 48:40

Babylon - The Great Eagle





- “Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs!” Jer 49:22

Babylon - The Great Eagle





- Daniel saw the Babylonian Empire rising up out of the sea, and it was in the form of a lion with eagle's wings Dan. 7:4

Babylon - The Great Eagle

- By using the eagle to describe Babylon, Ezekiel was using an image that the Babylonians themselves were proud of.
- It represented their speed, their reach, and their divine right to rule.
- When he introduces the second eagle (Egypt), he is showing that Egypt is trying to compete for the same "predator" status, but as the parable shows, they wouldn't have the same strength as the first.

Here is a picture of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who is going to come and crop the top of the tree.

And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD;
A great eagle with great wings, long winged,
full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the
highest branch of the cedar:

Ezekiel 17: 3

- A pseudonym for the Temple at Jerusalem, called "Lebanon" by Jews because its woodwork was wholly of cedars of Lebanon.

--Eusebius

{divers...: Heb. embroidering}



The cedar, as a tall tree, is the symbol of kingly elevation (compare Dan 4:10–12) (The

Eagle as Ensign

- Eagle symbol of Israel's Enemies
  - Greeks [Spartans, Trojans}
    - Antiochus Epiphanes
  - Romans
    - Titus Vespasian
  - Herod
  - Byzantium, Russia (Romanoff's)
  - Franks, Germans

Eagle as Ensign



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Eagle as Ensign





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- Franks, Germans

Eagle as Ensign







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  - Byzantium, Russia (Romanoff's)
  - Franks, Germans

Eagle as Ensign









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- Herod
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Eagle as Ensign









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Eagle as Ensign









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Eagle as Ensign















He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants.

Ezekiel 17:4

- "Top of his young twig": who would this be?
- The very young King Jeconiah, 18 years old,
  - sometimes called Coniah, sometimes called Jehoiachin.
- He was carried to Babylon, the city of merchants and trade. He was carried into captivity, leaving the Judean throne vacant.

Babylon (2Ki 24:15, 16), famous for its transport traffic on the Tigris and Euphrates. Also, by its connection with the Persian Gulf, it carried on much commerce with India.

He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field; he placed *it* by great waters, *and* set it *as a* willow tree.

Ezekiel 17:5

- The seed of the land = Zedekiah
  - When Nebuchadnezzar (the First Eagle) conquered Jerusalem in 597 BCE, he didn't destroy it completely.
  - He took King Jehoiachin away and hand-picked Zedekiah (Jehoiachin's uncle) to rule in his place.
  - The "Fruitful Field" refers to Judah/Jerusalem.
  - Nebuchadnezzar's "benevolence" was a strategic move: he wanted a stable, productive "vassal state" that would pay tribute and act as a buffer against Egypt.

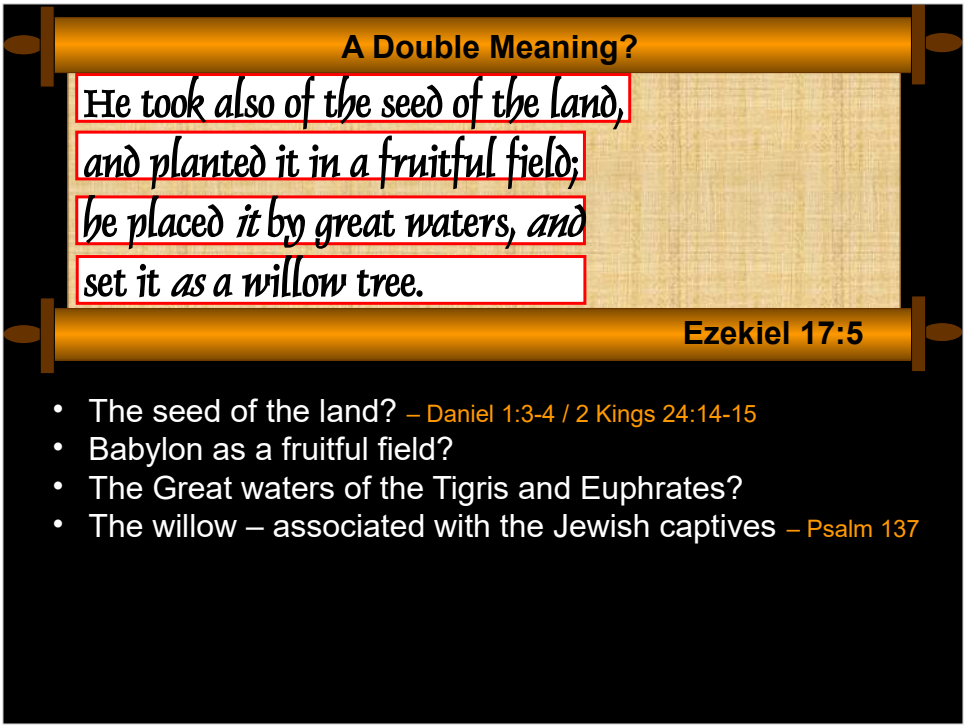
A native of the region; a son of the soil, not a foreigner: Zedekiah, uncle of Jehoiachin, of David's family.

[Remember: Nebuchadnezzar ***wrote*** Daniel 4!]

And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.

Ezekiel 17:6

- The Willow (or Vine) grew into a "spreading vine of low stature."
- Nebuchadnezzar didn't want a "Great Cedar" (an independent, powerful kingdom); he wanted a "Vine" or a "Willow"—something that stayed low to the ground and was dependent on the "waters" of Babylonian protection.



A native of the region; a son of the soil, not a foreigner: Zedekiah, uncle of Jehoiachin, of David's family.

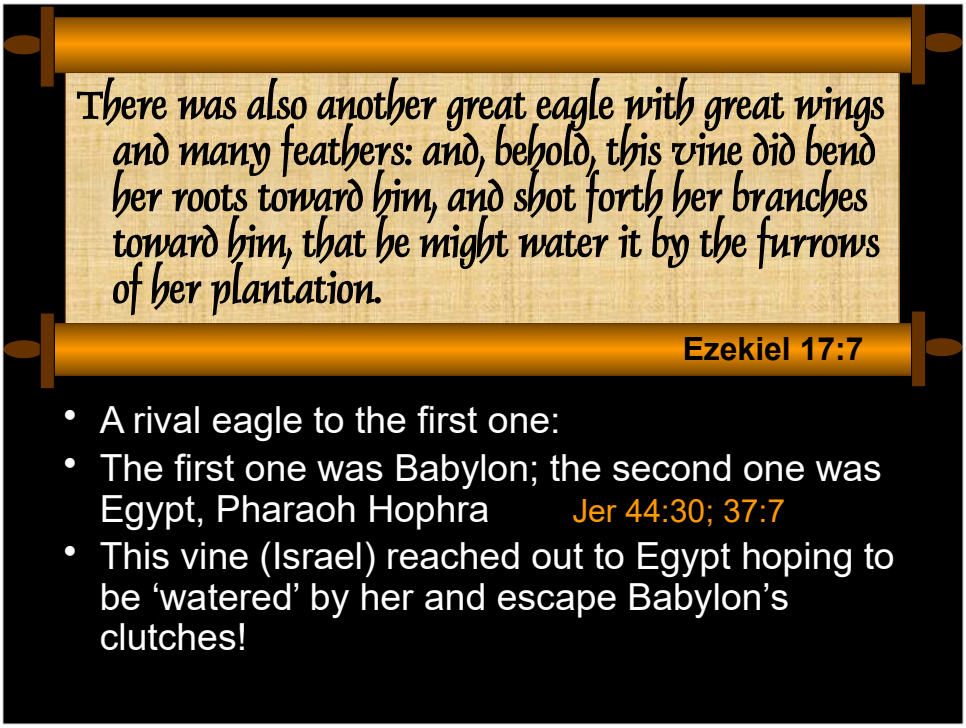
[Remember: Nebuchadnezzar ***wrote*** Daniel 4!]

Verse 5 - Alternative

- While the "fruitful field" in the riddle is Judah, the phrase "placed it by great waters" is a deliberate Babylonian "trigger."
- Babylon was the land of the Tigris and Euphrates—a land defined by its massive irrigation canals.
- Psalm 137:1-2: *"By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars [willows] we hung our harps."*
- Jeremiah told the exiles to "build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce" (Jeremiah 29:5). In this sense, the "faithful" (like Daniel) were indeed "planted" in Babylon and thrived there, even in captivity.

A native of the region; a son of the soil, not a foreigner: Zedekiah, uncle of Jehoiachin, of David's family.

[Remember: Nebuchadnezzar ***wrote*** Daniel 4!]



Pharaoh Hophra, the successor of Necho (2Ki 23:29).

It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

Ezekiel 17:8

- Nebuchadnezzar had taken the youngest son of Josiah, Metaniah, put him on the throne as a vassal, and renamed him Zedekiah.
- Zedekiah swore an oath before the Lord to be loyal to Nebuchadnezzar.
- In another amazing act of ingratitude, Zedekiah rebelled against king Neb, and against God!

It was not want of the necessaries of life, nor oppression on the port of Nebuchadnezzar, which caused Zedekiah to revolt: it was gratuitous ambition, pride, and ingratitude.

Treacherous Rebellion

- This second eagle was not only Egypt, but Pharaoh Hopra. 2 Chr 36:9-13; Jer 44:30; 37:7; 52:1-7
- With no cause, Zedekiah turned to him for support
- Around 120yrs before this, Isaiah spoke out against such an alliance. Isa 30:1-7;31:1-3
- The prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel and others, all pointed out that Nebuchadnezzar was the instrument of God bringing judgment to the land in the first place!
- Note also this ‘prophecy’ of Ezekiel was around 5 years BEFORE Zedekiah actually rebelled!

Zedekiah had sworn an oath before the Lord.



Pharaoh Hophra, the successor of Necho (2Ki 23:29).

Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof.

Ezekiel 17:9

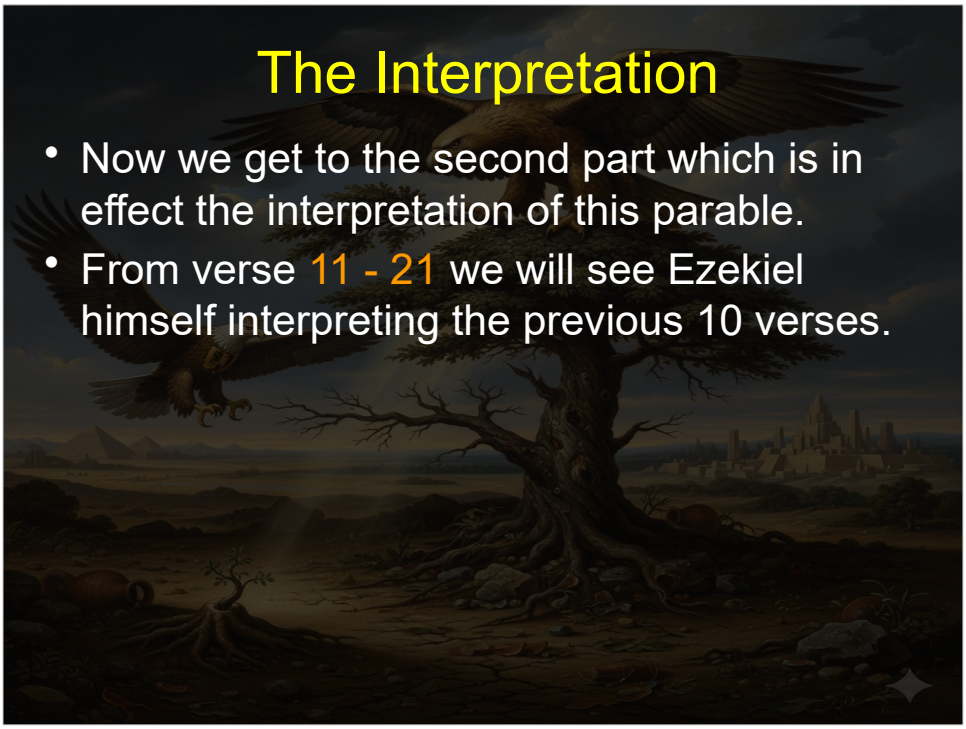
Yea, behold, *being* planted, shall it prosper?
shall it not utterly wither,
when the east wind toucheth it?
it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.

Ezekiel 17:10

- The 'east wind' represents Nebuchadnezzar.

  Cf.Job 27:21; Isa 27:8; Hos 13:15
- The undercurrent here is instead of being loyal to the first eagle, it treacherously turned to the second one.
- Zedekiah was taken at Jericho, on Jewish soil

  Jer 52:8


The Interpretation
• Now we get to the second part which is in effect the interpretation of this parable.
• From verse 11 - 21 we will see Ezekiel himself interpreting the previous 10 verses.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these *things mean*? tell *them*, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;

Ezekiel 17:11,12

And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land:

That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, *but* that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

Ezekiel 17: 13-14

- Nebuchadnezzar dealt sincerely and openly in proposing conditions, and moderate ones at that!
- Therefore, Zedekiah's treachery was merely a counterpart to their treachery towards God.

13] {taken an...: Heb. brought him to an oath}

But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?

Ezekiel 17:15

- Egypt abounded in both, but they were forbidden to Israel Deut 17:16; Is 31:1, 3; Isa 36:9
- The whole region from Thebes to Memphis was filled with royal stalls: 20,000 chariots with two horses in each could be furnished for war.
  Diodorus Siculus [1.45]

Even the heathen believed that breakers of an oath would not “escape” punishment.

Oaths

- One of the issues you will discover in the Scripture is that an oath before the Lord, even an oath made under fraud, needs to be honored.
- Even the Gibeonite oath, made on fraudulent premises, still had to be honored. Josh 9; 2 Sam 21:1-3

Oaths

- Jeremiah had been warning Zedekiah that he had made an oath and he would have to hold to it. But obviously Zedekiah went ahead despite those warnings, and sought aid from Egypt.
- The swearing of an oath in the Old Testament was authenticated by accompanying sacrifices. That involved the Lord who took them seriously.

As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely in the place *where* the king *dwelleth* that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, *even* with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.

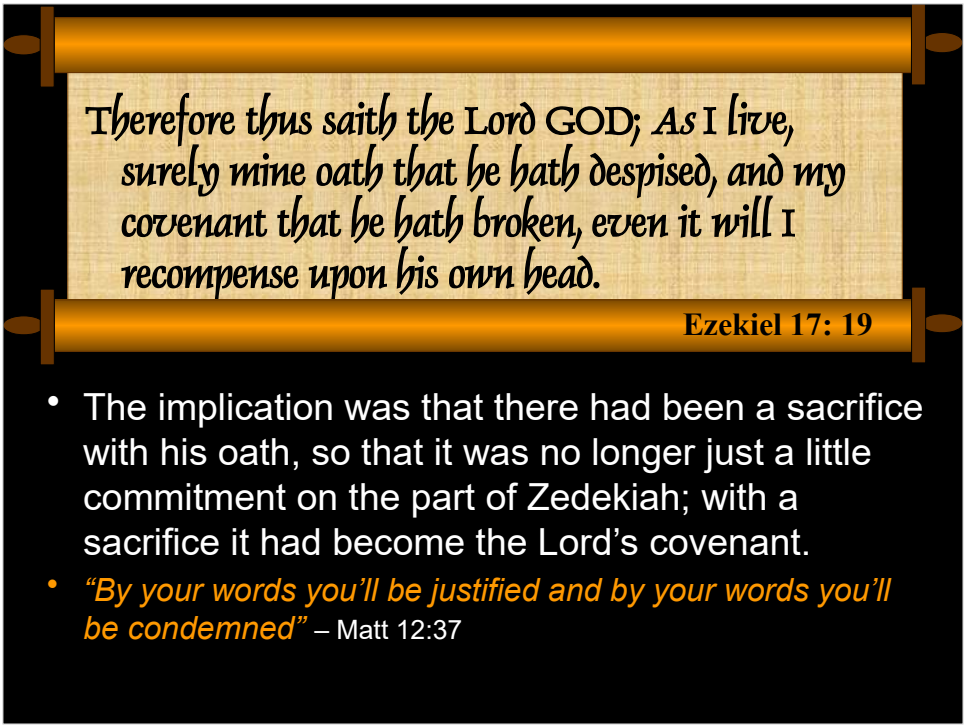
Ezekiel 17:16

- Zedekiah would die in the land that he despised, and under the king whose covenant he broke.
- He repeats the prophecy of Ezek 12:13

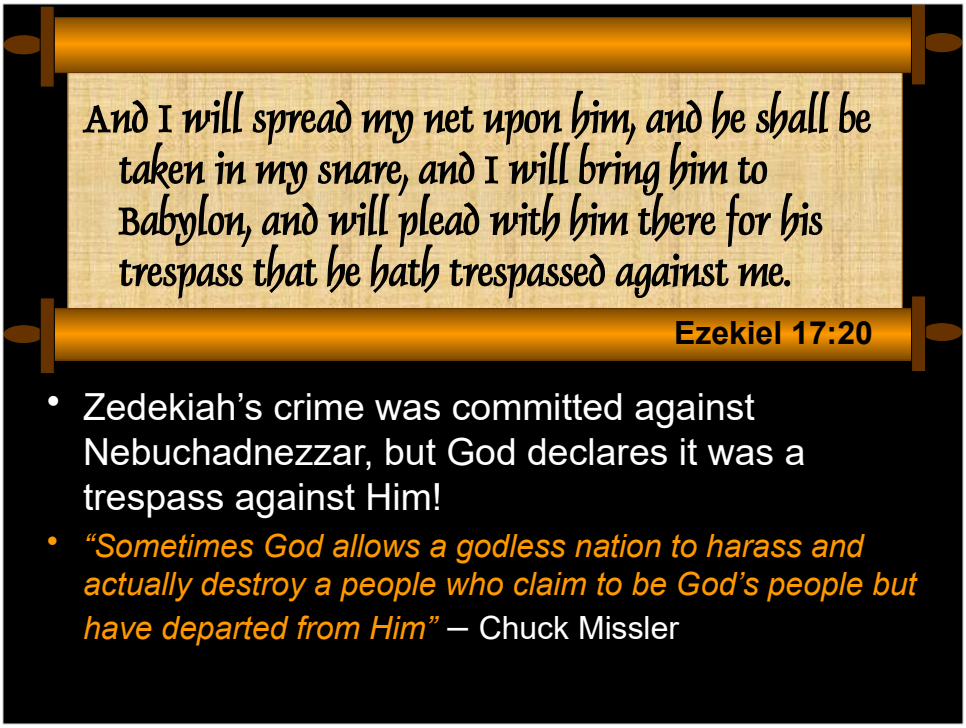
Neither shall Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounts, and building forts, to cut off many persons:

Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these *things*, he shall not escape.

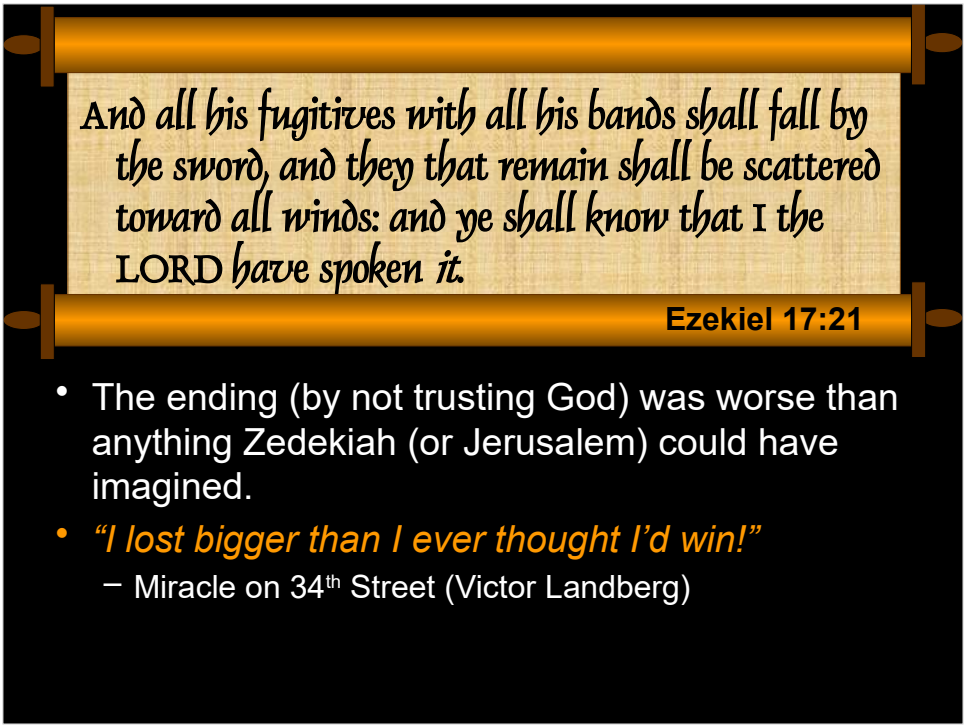
Ezekiel 17: 17,18



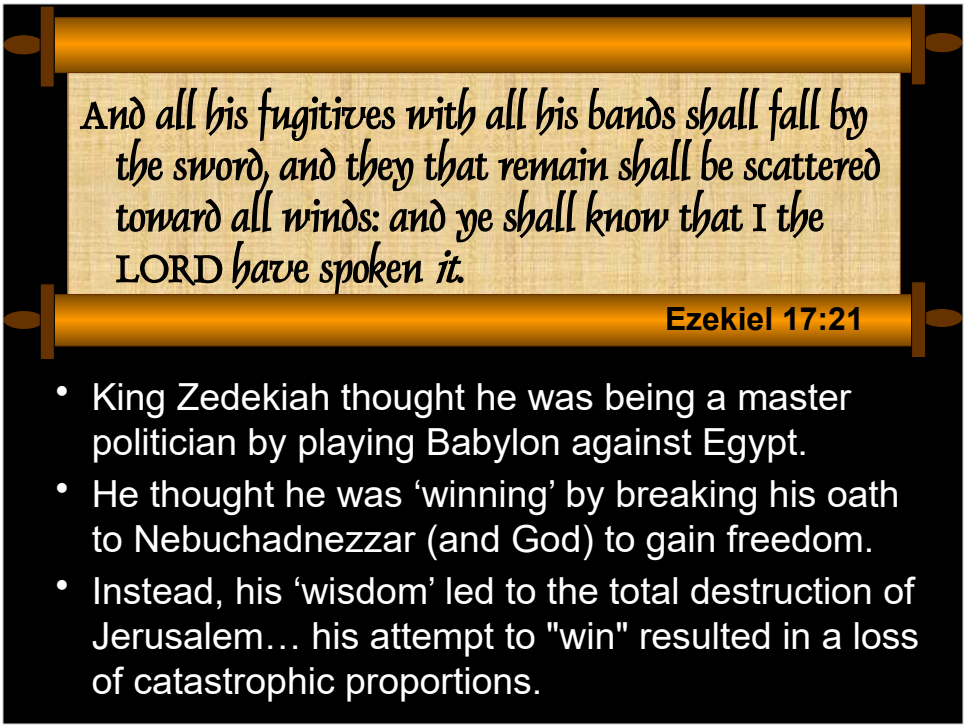
God Himself must therefore avenge the violation of *His covenant* "on the head" of the perjurer (compare Ps 7:16).



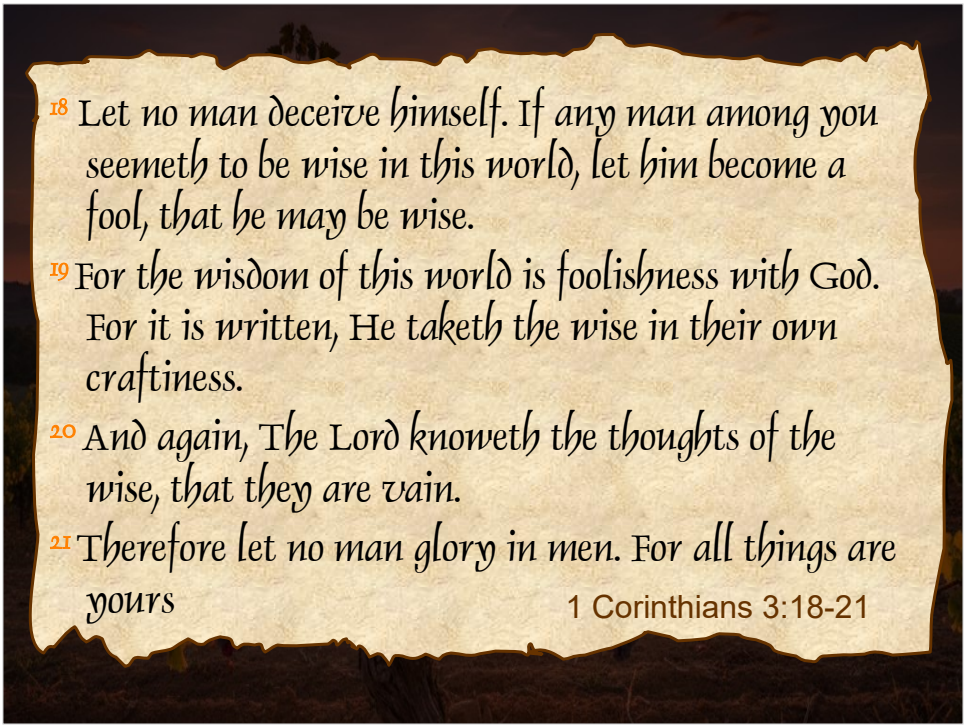
Sometimes God allows a godless nation to harass and actually destroy a people who claim to be God's people but have departed from Him.



King Zedekiah thought he was being a master politician by playing Babylon against Egypt. He thought he was "winning" by breaking his oath to Nebuchadnezzar to gain freedom. Instead, his cleverness led to the total destruction of Jerusalem. Like the rival toy store boss, his attempt to "win" resulted in a loss of catastrophic proportions.



King Zedekiah thought he was being a master politician by playing Babylon against Egypt. He thought he was "winning" by breaking his oath to Nebuchadnezzar to gain freedom. Instead, his cleverness led to the total destruction of Jerusalem. Like the rival toy store boss, his attempt to "win" resulted in a loss of catastrophic proportions.


18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you
seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a
fool, that he may be wise.
19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.
For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own
craftiness.
20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the
wise, that they are vain.
21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are
yours
1 Corinthians 3:18-21

5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart;
and lean not unto thine own understanding.
6 In all thy ways acknowledge him,
and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

The King of the Davidic Line

- Ezekiel Ch 17-18 are two chapters dealing with the ending of the Dynasty of David, the succession of kings in Judah:
  - *"But in the middle are next three verses which deal with the most important King of the Davidic line, namely the Messiah*." CM Eze 17:22-24

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set *it*; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant *it* upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- God compares Himself to Nebuchadnezzar:
- *"He took of the seed of the land and planted it, so will I, but with better success than he had.*
- *The branch he plucked (Zedekiah) and planted, flourished but for a time, to perish at last; …*

Nebuchadnezzar broke off a twig from the cedar and brought it to Babylon, and the shoot he planted died.

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set *it*; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant *it* upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- *God says: "…I will plant a scion of the same tree, the house of David, to whom the kingdom belongs by an everlasting covenant, and it shall be the shelter of the whole world, and shall be for ever."*
- In the Old Testament, the Messiah is often described using the Hebrew word *tsemach*, which is frequently translated as **"Branch"** or **"Scion"** Zec 3:8; 6:12; Isa 11:1; 4:2; Jer 23:5; 33:15

In horticulture, a **scion** is a young shoot or twig cut from one plant to be **grafted** onto the rootstock of another.

In a family sense, a scion is a

Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- The Lord declares that He himself will pluck off a shoot from the top of the high cedar (the Davidic house);
  vv. 2, 3; Isa 53:2
  and plant it on a high mountain, that all may see it and find protection under it
  Isa 2:2; 11:10 Eze 17:23; Mat 13:31, 32

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Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:

Ezekiel 17:22

- A great picture of the Messiah! "a *tender* plant and root out of a dry ground"; Isa 53:2
- The beginning of His kingdom being humble, His reputed parents of lowly rank, though King David's lineal representatives;
- Yet, God here calls Him, in respect to His purpose, "the highest … of the high" Ps 89:27

In horticulture, a **scion** is a young shoot or twig cut from one plant to be **grafted** onto the rootstock of another.

In a family sense, a scion is a

In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.

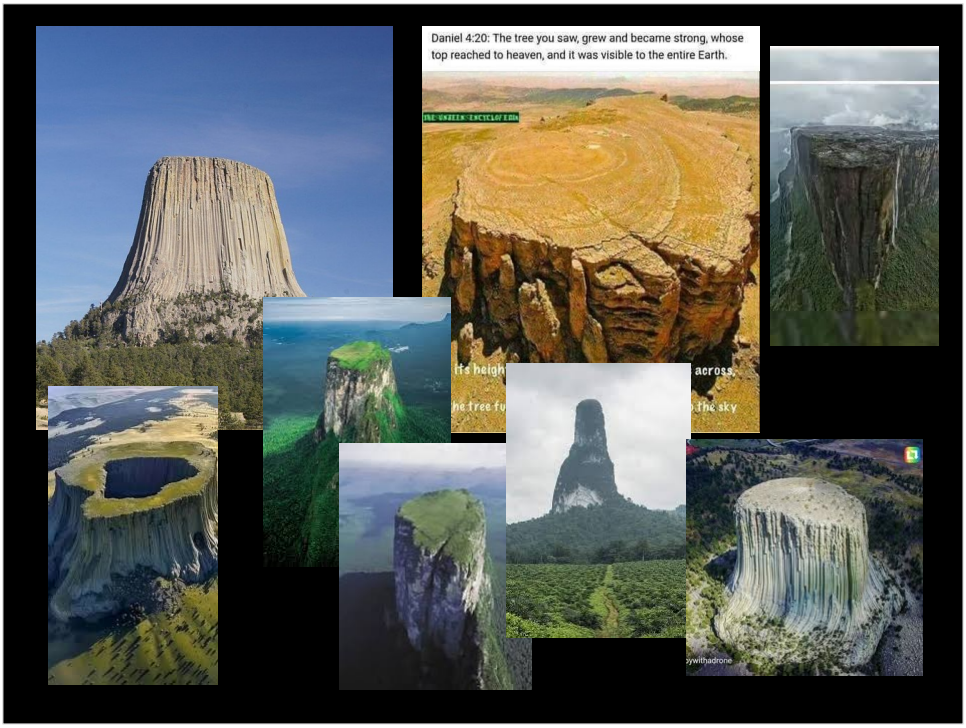
Ezekiel 17:23

- Don't miss the conclusion!
- *"all fowl of every wing"!*
- Every 'Eagle' – every power and authority will be subservient to the Goodly Ceder (not lowly vine!)
  - Fowl (birds) in scripture are 'ministers or workers of iniquity'
  - All powers and dominions will bow before Him!

And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.

Ezekiel 17:24

- The establishment of this new and universal kingdom by YHWH will lead the world to recognize him as the Lord of human life and the Controller of Israel's destiny.
  - Other kingdoms are likewise called trees. 31:5, 8, 14, 16, 18

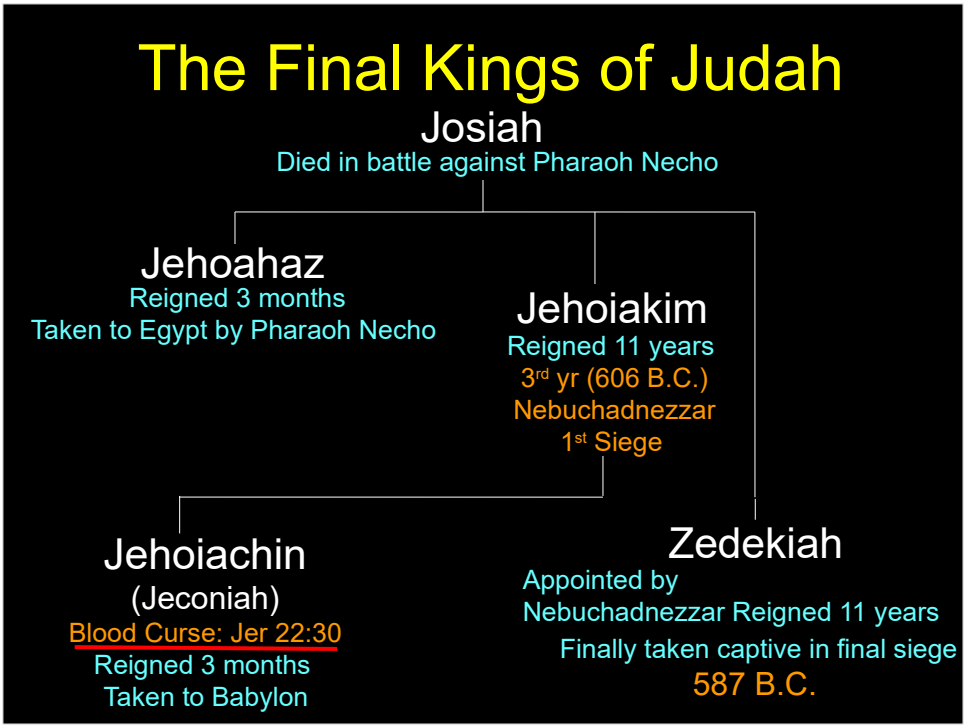

Daniel 4:20: The tree you saw, grew and became strong, whose top reached to heaven, and it was visible to the entire Earth.
across.
the sky

The Coming Messiah!

- *This prophecy was **not** fulfilled when Israel returned to the land after the Babylonian Captivity.*
- *The fulfillment of verses 22-24 awaits God's establishment of Israel in the Millennium under the Messiah, Jesus Christ.*
- At that time God's kingdom will rule the world
  Dan. 2:44-45; Zech. 14:3-9, 16-17

[In Chapter 25, it is *Israel's Army* (v.14) that will devastate their enemies (Edom, Philistines, et al): they didn't have an army then: they were in captivity…]


THE BOOK OF
EZEKIEL
To be continued..



1 Chron 3:17

17 And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir,
Salathiel his son,

KJV